



5 senses meditation

We used 5 senses meditation before the technique of focusing and after coming back from pilgrimage. Some of the participants practised the meditation while doing pilgrimage.

The main aim of **5 senses meditation** is to raise awareness of our body. It is an easy way how to relax and be „*right here, right now*“ and focus on our senses.

First, we find a relax position, all the body is relaxed, close your eyes. We focus on breathing. With each breath we try to inhale and exhale more profoundly. We scan our body for any discomfort and we try to relax more and more. We don't pay attention to any thoughts. When there are thoughts appearing, just let them go and shift your attention back to your senses. Do not judge yourself and your thoughts, just come back to the present moment and your senses.

Then we start brining awareness to each of our 5 senses.

- 1) **Sense of touch** – bring the attention on the touch of our body with the ground/chair (legs, back, hands, fingers, ...). We can observe temperature of different body parts. We don't think, we just observe the touch and feelings which appears. We do not evaluate, we just enjoy and observe.
- 2) **Sense of taste** – shift the attention to your mouth. You can move your tongue and teeth to become more aware of different tastes, temperature, saliva. You can notice an aftertaste of a previous meal or drink. Just observe.
- 3) **Sense of smell** – Breathe in and just observe what you can smell (food, wood, animals, air...). You can also observe temperature, wind.
- 4) **Sense of sight** – Shift your attention to the sight. You can keep your eyes closed and just observe the light which comes through your eyelids. You can open your eyes for a second to see colours, shapes, light and close them again. Just observe what you just have seen.
- 5) **Sense of hearing** – Shift your attention to the last sense. Notice the sounds around you and just notice them. Sounds might be close or distant, internal like digestion or external like sounds of traffic/music/birds... You might hear new and new sounds. Just observe them.

Now we have all five senses. This is me right here, right now. You can scan your body shortly again. You might stay for a little more with one of your sense.

Slowly start moving your body, stretch, you can put your hand on your face and do short massage. Finally, you can open your eyes. How do you feel? What has changed after this short meditation?

Resources:

Edita was inspired for this meditation while studying psychology. The name of the technique is „Technika zakotvení v tělesné prožívané skutečnosti“.

In Czech: Hájek, K. (1999b): Čtvero kotvení aneb Kde hledat životní rovnováhu. Psychologie dnes, 5 (6), 14-16

In English:

<https://www.clayton.edu/Portals/541/docs/Five%20Senses%20Mindfulness%20Exercise.pdf>

Focusing

It is a technique developed by Eugene Gendlin in 1978. Focusing can help us to get new understanding of situations using body wisdom instead of thinking and analysing the situation rationally.

I do recommend to do a short exercise which will bring awareness to our body before Focusing.

6 basic steps

1) Clearing a space

Sit in a relaxed position, close your eyes and just breathe, breathe in and out. There might be some thoughts / problems appearing, acknowledge them and let them go. Don't try to analyse them, just acknowledge them and focus on your breathing. If the same thoughts/problems keep coming to your mind, you can make a list and put it aside. Don't search for the thoughts actively. Always come back to your breathing.

2) Felt sense

Now focus on your inner body. Just be without thinking. I ask you one question. Don't think, just be and observe the body. What do you struggle with at your work? Don't think. Breathe and let your body show you. You can feel part of your body which brings any sensations. It can be your cheek/stomach/leg,.... If more sensations appear, focus on the strongest one.

3) Handle

If you have the body sensation, try to observe it and name it. It can be one word, one phrase, an image, symbol. Don't think, let it come. The handle then helps you to return the felt sense.

4) Resonating

Go back and forth between the felt sense and the word/symbol/image,... and check how they resonate with one another. You might feel a little shift if the felt sense and image resonate. Do not rush the answer.

5) Asking

Be with the felt sense, Now you have time to ask: What is the worst about it? What would it need? What would my body need? Don't think, just observe the answers without analysing them and remember them..

6) Receiving

Receive whatever comes and remember it. Don't evaluate.

Focus on your breathing. Start moving your body parts. Rub your face with your hands and open your eyes.

You can find more information here:

Description of 6 basic steps of focusing:

<https://hopeandpossibility.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Gendlin%E2%80%99s-six-steps-for-effective-Focusing.pdf>

Introduction to focusing and how to use it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZwzdkKARWrw>

Reminder: Don't use focusing ad hoc. Edita took part in a focusing training course and practised it several times before leading focusing for others. Keep in mind that it might be a powerful tool and open sensible topics.